



**State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**

Habitat Program: 600 Capitol Way N, Olympia, Washington 98501-1091 - (360) 902-2534

**DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE
AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON SCOPE OF EIS**

Name of Proposal: WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE (WDFW)
STATEWIDE STEELHEAD MANAGEMENT PLAN

Description of Proposal: The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife is developing a statewide steelhead management plan to address hatchery, harvest, enforcement, monitoring, and outreach & education actions needed for continued steelhead stock preservation, restoration and protection recovery.

The Statewide Steelhead Management Plan is a non-project statewide policy proposal, which assesses the potential environmental impacts of policies and strategies designed to improve hatchery, harvest, enforcement, monitoring and outreach & education actions pertaining to steelhead programs in Washington. Supplemental Environmental Impact Statements will be developed at the regional level for steelhead stocks in regions of Washington State at a later date. The first region to be addressed will be Puget Sound stocks.

Proponent: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Project Contact: Steelhead Management Plan Project Manager, Amilee Wilson, at 360-902-2856 or email wilsoalw@dfw.wa.gov

Location of Proposal, including street, if any: All steelhead stocks in the State of Washington.

Lead Agency: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

EIS Required. Consistent with RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c), an environmental impact statement (EIS) will be prepared to analyze the potentially adverse impacts of this proposal.

Many impacts have already been reviewed using other processes including: the WDFW Draft Steelhead Management Plan (Draft EIS, March 1994), the Wild Salmonid Policy (Final EIS, September 2004) and the Puget Sound Harvest Resource Management Plan (March 2004).

The lead agency had identified the following areas for discussion in the EIS:

- Impacts of proposed plan on natural spawning steelhead stocks
- Impacts of proposed plan on existing WDFW hatchery, harvest, enforcement, habitat, monitoring programs
- Impacts of proposed plan on recreational fishing
- Other ecological and cultural values

Purpose:

WDFW will develop policies and strategies to improve abundance, productivity, diversity and spatial structure of Washington's steelhead through the examination of WDFW hatchery, harvest, enforcement, habitat, research/monitoring, and outreach & education programs.

Need:

This statewide steelhead plan proposal is needed in order to restore and protect the diversity and long-term productivity of Washington's steelhead stocks and their habitats. WDFW will accomplish this goal within the guidance of the agency's mission statement, strategic goals and objectives. Goals may include supporting hatchery programs that provide maximum recreational opportunities compatible with healthy diverse fish and wildlife populations. WDFW will work with Tribal governments to ensure fish and wildlife management objectives are met including sustaining ceremonial, subsistence, commercial and recreational fisheries; non-consumptive fish benefits; and other related cultural and ecological values.

The Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife will address the need to develop a comprehensive statewide steelhead management plan. There are increasing expectations for fish managers to balance varied public needs to maintain and restore natural stocks, support tribal and recreational harvest opportunities, and provide additional important social-cultural and environmental values. WDFW will develop a statewide steelhead management plan to guide the evaluation and development of WDFW's hatchery, harvest, enforcement, habitat and outreach & education programs to aid in the conservation and restoration of natural steelhead stocks and provide harvest opportunity consistent with natural stock restoration objectives. The department must also identify information gaps pertaining to natural steelhead stocks and develop research and monitoring programs to improve resource management decisions.

Objectives:

In order for an alternative to be considered in the statewide steelhead planning process, its strategies must meet the stated purpose and need (see above). The following objectives for the statewide steelhead management plan used to evaluate potential alternatives are:

1. Provide hatchery programs that either:
 - a) Provide harvest opportunity while meeting needs of natural stock restoration goals, or
 - b) Are conservation programs that have a net benefit to natural spawning steelhead stocks
2. Provide fisheries that meet conservation objectives and provide diverse consumptive and non-consumptive opportunities.
3. Identify needed research and monitoring programs to evaluate the status of natural steelhead stocks and effects of management actions:
 - a) Steelhead stock assessment
 - b) Quantification of harvest mortality rates
 - c) Juvenile production monitoring
 - d) Changes in marine climate conditions

The statewide steelhead management plan must additionally achieve the following secondary objectives, which are essential for the administration of the plan and the implementation of the recommendations:

- Provide adaptive management through feedback and communication that refine strategies and outcomes as appropriate
- Foster communication and transparency concerning WDFW management activities

Possible Performance Criteria – those against which alternative steelhead management strategies may be evaluated based on their efficiency and effectiveness at attaining the above stated objectives.

Evaluation criteria may include:

- Cost and resources required to implement strategies
- Evaluation of environmental effects of strategies on natural resources

Scoping. Agencies, affected tribes and members of the public are invited to comment on the scope of the EIS. You may comment on alternatives, mitigation measures, probable impacts, and licenses or other approvals that may be required. The method and deadline for giving us your comments are:

Submit written comments to:

**SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, Regulatory Services Section, Habitat Program
600 Capitol Way North
Olympia, WA 98501**

Comments submitted via email format will not be accepted. Written comments should be received at the address listed no later than **January 15, 2007**

If you have any questions about the project, please contact the Steelhead Management Plan Project Manager, Amilee Wilson, at 360-902-2856 or email wilsoalw@dfw.wa.gov.

If you have questions regarding the scoping process, please contact the SEPA Coordinator, Teresa Eturaspe, at 360-902-2575 or email: habitatSEPA@dfw.wa.gov

Responsible Official: Teresa A. Eturaspe

Position/Title: SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, Regulatory Services Section, Habitat Program

Address: 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501

DATE OF ISSUE: December 22, 2006 **SIGNATURE:** 